

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Canceled)
2. (Currently Amended) An initiator incorporated in an inflator and adapted to trigger the inflator through propagation of flame from an initiating explosive to a gas generator of the inflator, wherein the initiator comprises a single capsule for accommodating the initiating explosive, the capsule having a tubular side portion and a closed bottom portion, the tubular side portion comprising ~~at least two grooves that~~ a pair of grooves located on a surface of the tubular side portion in opposition to each other with respect to a longitudinal axis of the tubular side portion, the pair of grooves being configured to accelerate rupture of the tubular side portion and that and to propagate the flame in at least two different directions in opposite directions upon ignition of the initiating explosive.
3. (Withdrawn - Currently Amended) An initiator according to claim 2, wherein the initiator comprises a corner connection portion of the tubular capsule, ~~which~~ the corner connection portion connects the tubular side portion and the bottom portion of the capsule, the corner connection portion having the ~~at least two~~ pair of grooves.
- 4-10. (Canceled)
11. (Withdrawn - Currently Amended) An initiator according to claim 2, wherein the capsule further comprises a taper portion for guiding detonation force induced from ignition of the initiating explosive toward the ~~at least two~~ pair of grooves.
- 12-15. (Canceled)
16. (Currently Amended) An initiator according to claim 2, wherein the strength of the tubular side portion of the capsule is less than that of the closed bottom portion of the capsule.

17. (Currently Amended) An initiator according to claim 16, wherein a wall thickness of the tubular side portion of the capsule is smaller than ~~that~~ a wall thickness of the closed bottom portion of the capsule.

18-19. (Canceled)

20. (Withdrawn - Currently Amended) An initiator according to claim 16, wherein the closed bottom portion of the capsule convexly protrudes into an interior of the capsule so as to weaken the strength of the tubular side portion.

21. (Withdrawn - Currently Amended) An initiator according to claim 20, wherein the ~~at least two~~ pair of grooves are biased toward the closed bottom portion of the capsule from a position corresponding to a tip of a convex shape of the closed bottom portion.

22. (Canceled)

23. (Withdrawn - Currently Amended) An initiator according to claim 2, further comprising a detonation-force-enhancing device implemented such that detonation force to be imposed on the tubular side portion of the capsule is greater than that to be imposed on the closed bottom portion of the capsule.

24. (Withdrawn - Currently Amended) An initiator according to claim 23, wherein the detonation-force-enhancing device is implemented such that the amount of an initiating explosive for rupturing the tubular side portion of the capsule is greater than that of an initiating explosive for rupturing the closed bottom portion of the capsule.

25. (Withdrawn - Currently Amended) An initiator according to claim 23, wherein the detonation-force-enhancing device is implemented such that an initiating explosive for rupturing the tubular side portion of the capsule is greater in detonation force than an initiating explosive for rupturing the closed bottom portion of the capsule.

26-27. (Canceled)

28. (Withdrawn - Currently Amended) An initiator according to claim 3, wherein the capsule comprises a taper portion for guiding detonation force induced from ignition of the initiating explosive toward the ~~at least two~~pair of grooves.

29. (Canceled)

30. (New) An initiator according to claim 2, wherein the pair of grooves have a V-shaped cross section.

31. (New) An inflator comprising:

a casing having two chambers, each chamber enclosing gas-generating materials and combustion accelerators; and

an initiator incorporated into the casing at a longitudinally central portion of the casing, the initiator adapted to trigger the inflator through propagation of flame from an initiating explosive to the gas-generating materials and the combustion accelerators in each of the chambers, wherein

the two chambers of the casing are disposed on one and the other sides, respectively, of the initiator so as to be in opposition to each other with respect to the initiator, and

the initiator includes a single capsule for accommodating the initiating explosive, the capsule having a tubular side portion and a closed bottom portion, the tubular side portion comprising a pair of grooves located on a surface of the tubular side portion in opposition to each other with respect to a longitudinal axis of the tubular side portion, the pair of grooves being configured to accelerate rupture of the tubular side portion and to propagate the flame in opposite directions toward the gas-generating materials and the combustion accelerators in the respective chambers upon ignition of the initiating explosive.

32. (New) An initiator according to claim 31, wherein the initiator is T-shaped, the stem of the T-shaped initiator being formed by the initiator, and the arms of the T-shaped initiator being formed by the two chambers of the casing, respectively.

33. (New) An initiator according to claim 31, wherein the inflator is incorporated into an airbag apparatus of a vehicle, the airbag apparatus being positioned to protect the heads of persons sitting, respectively, in front and rear seats of the vehicle.

34. (New) An initiator according to claim 31, wherein the inflator is incorporated into a side airbag apparatus of a vehicle, the side airbag apparatus being positioned to protect a side body region of a person sitting in the vehicle.